

# ALL ABOUT U.S.

A NEWSLETTER FOR AMERICAN CENTERS, CORNERS & SHELVES IN RUSSIA

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## AMERICAN HOLIDAYS AND DATES AT THE ACC.

### YUZHNO-SAKHALINSK.

AC held the Independence Day celebration with kids from the summer camp of Lyceum № 1. Children aged from 7 to 14 for the first time learned about Independence Day's origins, its meaning and traditions. Children got a storm of delight by entertaining quiz, games and songs in English. All participants of the event were presented with bookmarks and pens with the logo of the American Corner. The most active were awarded with books about the United States in English.



Another part of the holiday events was informative presentation by Victor Southwick, USA, for general public of the Sakhalin regional library. It was devoted to the celebration of Independence Day in the United States.



Mr. Southwick told not only about the history of this holiday, but also showed a lot of photos from the family album, where he and his family celebrate this day. There were home decorations with garlands of flags, involvement in various competitions, fireworks arranging and having pizza with friends in a cozy cafe. Victor pleased with all the excellent performance of songs in honor of their country. The participants had the best possible experience from the presentations and communicating with Victor Southwick.

**TOMSK.** On the eve of the 50th anniversary of "I have a dream" speech by Martin Luther King delivered on August 28th in 1963, the AC organized a meeting devoted to this event. At the beginning of the meeting AC staff showed to the audience a presentation reminding them about racial problems that existed in the USA in those times; that followed by facts about Martin Luther King, his life and career, a part of his famous "I have a dream" speech was also shown. The presentations were followed by a lively discussion; the participants asked lots of questions about M.L.King, discussed racial problems in the US and in general. At the end of the meeting everybody was invited to visit the AC and acquaint with books and DVDs display prepared to this remarkable date to learn more about M.L.King and prominent historical events of those times as well as with other resources available there.





## AMERICAN DIPLOMATS AT THE ACC.

**MOSCOW.** On July 15th the AC hosted a lecture by Tressa Weyer (U.S. Embassy, Moscow). Tressa spoke about the life of Ansel Adams, an American photographer and environmentalist best known for his black-and-white landscape photographs of the American West. The patrons had a wonderful opportunity to learn more about the special style of Mr. Adams – the so-called straight photography. This unique technique helps to produce an objective and realistic image, provides sharper contrast and needs no extra manipulations. Ansel Adams wrote a few books on photography which were definitely worth reading given that this outstanding photographer was really ahead of his time. The unusual experience of this photographer, his “when opportunity meets a prepared mind” philosophy, and the Zone System that he developed, greatly influenced the next generations of photographers. The audience expressed gratitude to Tressa Weyer for an informative and interesting lecture.



**YUZHNO-SAKHALINSK.** On July 18th the AC welcomed Consul of U.S. Consulate General in Vladivostok Edward W. Soltow, accompanied by Jim Meitner, U.S. Consular Agent-Sakhalin. The theme of the meeting was dedicated to the national holiday of the United States ‘Fourth of July’. Edward W. Soltow prepared a very informative, fascinating presentation and a quiz in English at the same time. There were the issues related to the Declaration of Independence, the presidency, the Constitution, the national flag and anthem of the United States. Each participant received the necessary knowledge on the subject at the end of the presentation and discussion.

### **NOVOSIBIRSK.**

On September, 5 2013 a consular officer from the US Embassy in Moscow John Brown spoke on summer work and travel program and student visas. Many young people would like to participate in the summer work and travel program as it presents a unique opportunity to visit the United States and get some work experience. After a presentation Mr. Brown answered the questions Novosibirsk students had about the program.



**IRKUTSK.** On the 17th of September Irkutsk Scientific Library hosted an event with Sarah Ziebel (US Embassy, Moscow), who gave the presentation to general public on the Environmental Issues. The patrons of the library had the opportunity to listen to a different perspective of the environmental protection. Ms. Ziebel spoke about the harm which is being done to the nature and to all humans by air pollution; how the natural disasters happen because of that and what we can do to prevent it. She shared with the audience the experience of some US states which did their best to fight hurricane aftermaths, etc.

***Also Sarah visited Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk and Khabarovsk. She had a number of events for librarians and general public there. These meetings showed great interest of local communities to the American culture and everyday life, to American spaces generally. Dear Sarah, we are waiting for you all over Russia!***

## ALUMNI EVENTS.

**YEKATERINBURG.** International Department of the City Mayor's Library hosted Children Drawing contest "My favorite English language character". The alumni took an active part in promoting and judging it. Alumni teachers announced the contest to their pupils in schools' summer camps, other alumni shared the idea with their own children and friends and, as a result, a bright exhibition of kids' works became a decoration to the International Department. More than 20 school children aged 7-16 participated in the contest and the youngest participant became 5-year-old Anya Mushtak. Her father Igor, OW program alumnus, had planted love for reading great books in her, which inspired his daughter to



*The winner – Sasha Baryshnikova, FSA program alumna's daughter – with her main prize*



*The drawing of Anya Mushtak (5 years) – the daughter of OW program alumnus*

**BRYANSK.** On the 3rd of August the AC opened the photo exhibition "Crossroad of Cultures". 12 participants of the Fulbright Program using photos "told" about their impressions of acquaintance to American culture and traditions of this multinational country. 42 works for the exhibition are presented by scientists, professors, people of arts from Votkinsk, Bryansk, Moscow, Novosibirsk, Nizhny Novgorod, St. Petersburg, Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), Tebessa (Algeria). On the opening day everybody could "go for a walk" along streets of American cities, dance and listen to jazz, blues, country and rock-and-roll.



aspects of participating in the program - from "how I decided to go to study in the US" to "how I felt after coming back" and "how much it changed my life".

**NIZHNIY NOVGOROD.** On September 13th, FLEX alumni had their traditional meeting to present the Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) Program. This program provides scholarships for high school students (ages 15-17) from Eurasia to spend an academic year in the United States, living with a family and attending an American high school.

As usual the alumni were happy to answer all possible questions about the application process and share their experience after spending a year in the United States. They gave their presentations and spoke on different





**VOLOGDA.** On September 7, 2013 a group of Americans from Texas visited our discussion club. The main subject was "Fear". Fear is a vital response to physical and emotional danger – if we didn't feel it, we couldn't protect ourselves from legitimate threats. All participants gave their view. Everybody worked in small groups and then we discussed it in our one big group. It was very interesting to know



about opinion of Russian students and teachers and Americans. This event was prepared by Tatiana Kurochkina (Fulbright 2011).



**YEKATERINBURG.** On September, 20 alumni participated in a master class "Find Your Style" held by the AC staff at the City Center. The trainer, Tatiana Stafeeva, the Head of the Ural School of Image and Style, a professional image



maker, spoke about the importance of appropriate appearance for different areas of life – career advancement, client satisfaction, better work relationships, a more pleasant organizational climate, a more fulfilling work, rise in status and social space harmonization. As a minimum appropriate and thoughtful image helps to make favorable impression and good communication, more often image competency helps people to climb career ladder and gain recognition. Participants learnt the concept of dress-code, look, style, practiced in choosing the appropriate garments and accessories for different types of events, experimented with colors and fabrics. As a result of the master class alumni learnt how to craft image according to their goals and audiences they need to influence to reach their full potential, everyone got personal recommendations from the trainer. 14 alumni participated.

**NOVOSIBIRSK.** On September 21, 2013 a FLEX alumna Polina Zaitseva spoke to the group of high school students about the FLEX program and her unforgettable experiences in the American South.. The participating students enjoyed Polina's interesting account of her American school year. The American studies lesson was followed by a tour of the library.



## ACC FOR KIDS AND CHILDREN.

**MOSCOW.** On July, 31 American and Russian volunteers conducted "Storytelling for children". Kids from 7 to 10 were invited to learn everything about balloons. They discovered the history of balloons (from 1931) and Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade which started in 1924. The boys and the girls played games with balloons (popping the balloons, jumping, "hot potato"). The American volunteer read a book "Balloons over Broadway" by Melissa Sweet. The children draw and sang the song about the red balloon. Also the cartoon "Balloon Land" was shown. The kids had a lot of fun, certainly enjoyed the program. The AC staff expresses gratitude to the volunteers for such great event.



**TOMSK.** On August, 2nd the AC hosted school students who attend summer language courses. The staff told them about the USA, about books and magazines, movies and board games in the AC collection, about interesting events and contests that take place here. The students got particularly interested in the cartoons which they can watch here. They watched a documentary about New England and one of the greatest cartoons by Walt Disney with pleasure. In the end of the meeting everybody was presented with souvenir bookmarks and invited to come to AC more often, to take part in its events.



**YEKATERINBURG.** During this summer the Mayor's Library International Department worked extensively with school summer camps. More than 250 school children aged 6-17 visited events devoted to the history and traditions of the United States, got acquainted with American books, magazines and board games.



### **NOVOSIBIRSK.**

On September 3, 2013 a group of nine graders from the school "Gornostai" visited the American Corner and participated in a quiz on the United States. The visiting students learned about the Corner website and its pages in social networks and had a chance to explore some sites designed to help students learn English better.

**MOSCOW.** The Children's Club at the AMC opened a new season with an exciting topic "New York". The event found great respond among about 40 children and their parents. Our young patrons were welcomed by the staff with the offer to take a picture as the Statue of Liberty after what they were shown in the hall where they watched the presentation. During watching the slides they were asked some questions in order to find out what information they know and can share with others, who don't. After that they were given a short quiz before travelling along the streets of Manhattan, Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island, that were arranged as "stations" and where the kids, having accomplished the tasks, got boroughs to stick on their own maps. At the end they were given small prizes and watched a cartoon "Hey, Arnold!" in which the action took place in New York.





## ACC FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS.

**TOMSK.** On August, 28 the AC presented its resources, services and programs on a teacher's conference devoted to priority directions of teaching foreign languages in city schools. Natalia Turaeva, AC coordinator, told in detail what interesting and useful things the ESL teachers can find in the Center for themselves and their pupils, what events were organized for them last academic year and during holidays. It was interesting for many teachers to learn that there is also a collection of entertaining educational board games in Tomsk AC, as well as a computer game Trace Effects together with the main hero of which the players learn the language and travel across the United States. Last summer school children regularly gathered in AC to play these games and watch great American cartoons. Teachers were invited to participate in such Game Hours and other events of American Center in the upcoming academic year. In particular, Tomsk AC together with TELTA (Tomsk English Language Teachers' Association) with the support of US embassy in Moscow will run the program New approaches to the effective academic writing for Tomsk students this fall within the framework of which school students will be able to participate in the contest of essays and attend the workshops and lectures by teachers of Tomsk universities and American experts on different formats of written work. In the end AC staff congratulated the participants of the conference on the coming Knowledge Day, gave them booklets about the center and promotional bookmarks.



**NOVOSIBIRSK.** On September 11, 2013 a group of English teachers from local schools, currently undergoing an upgrade training at the Novosibirsk Teacher Upgrade Training Institute, came to the American Corner to get to know the Corner's vast resources on methodology and American studies.

**YEKATERINBURG.** On September 23<sup>rd</sup> the Mayor's Library International Department hosted a seminar for ESL teachers. More than 30 teachers gathered at the library to learn about its recourses and opportunities and also share their teaching experience with each other. Irina Masharova, 3TP program alumna and the Head of the City Foreign Languages Teachers Association told her colleagues about the Association activities and the plans for this school year. Tatiana Katkovska, 2013 alumna, shared her program participation experience with the audience, told about schools and museums she visited. Inspired by her visit to the US Tatiana gave a presentation "Forming skills in Foreign Language class and extra-curricular activities with the use of Fine Art". Slavyana Sagakyan, IRC specialist, told the audience about the U.S. Consulate General programs. The AC staff presented regular events for school students, special books for ESL teachers available at the AC, opportunities of participating in USG programs and the coming FLEX program contest. A pleasant fact that young teachers who came here for the first time showed big interest to the work of International Department and the recourses.



## ALUMNI IN FOCUS.



**Tatiana Katkovska**, an English language teacher in **Yekaterinburg** became the only MRP program-2013 finalist from Russia. The AC staff considers Tatiana to be one of the most deserving people among alumni and is justifiably proud to be those who “discovered” this wonderful, involved person to the world, a Teacher, enthusiastically giving her knowledge to children and getting new information from the others. Here what Tatiana says: “Yekaterinburg AC helps me a lot. Here I can find support and help, inspiration and approval, assistance and understanding anytime. For teachers it’s the real way to find any information and books on history, culture and literature

of the USA. It was here that my pupils had got to gain self-confidence, compare their knowledge with that of students from other schools, feel positive competition and wish to manifest themselves in the best light. If not the AC we would have still been on our own in a school located in an off-center city district. I believe the ACC program is unique, it helps to build the relationship between our countries stronger and mutual understanding between our people deeper.

This summer I got an awesome opportunity to discover the USA. I was happy to take part in the teacher training summer program “My American dream” at University of Illinois in Urbana - Champagne from June 16 to July 27 in



*Tatiana's students at Christmas cards master-class with Ana Storer, December, 2012*



*Tatiana's students with PAO Chris Istrati during the event devoted to the Frank Baum, February, 2010*

Its history and people. And my students have an opportunity to learn real facts about the country.”

*Dear colleagues! In case you actively collaborate with alumni, and you think they are truly remarkable and enthusiastic people, please let us know about them! Don't be shy; share your mutual success stories!*

2013. I learnt much about new methods and technologies in education. Besides, I discussed the urgent problems of education and shared ideas with other teachers from 25 different countries. We were lucky to meet ordinary people, explore museums and visit many cities. The most important thing that I've realized is that Russian and American people have much in common. I respect the idea of opportunity for those people who work hard to succeed. For me, the word “struggler” has become very important in understanding what American dream is.

Now I can tell many interesting facts about the USA,



*Tatiana is sharing her experience with her colleagues, September, 2013*



## ALL ABOUT EDUCATION.

**MOSCOW.** Education has changed considerably in a modern world and especially in the U.S. Dr. King spoke about several things that changed educational system, having created such a new opportunity as "MOOC", which is now used all over the world. He was also speaking about universities and their future in a global world as well as the ways of their survival in the age of technology. The patrons were excited to ask their questions on the topic and about Professor King's books. The AMC staff expresses gratitude to Dr. Charles King for a genuine and inspiring lecture.



**IRKUTSK.** Irkutsk Library participated in the educational fair. The fair lasted 6 days during which the patrons could enjoy lessons of foreign languages and SKYPE talks with the foreigners. Express lesson which held American Shelf started with the SKYPE talk. We had 7th grade schoolchildren who visited the library with their teacher. They spoke very good English and it was possible to talk on-line with our guest on SKYPE - Lucky Che. Lucky is a very outstanding character for the Siberian town like Irkutsk. He is an Afro-American and talks a British variant of English. He engaged kids in conversations

about their daily life. He seemed to be really interested in their efforts to overcome the language barrier and make the steps to talking more without being shy.

All in all, the SKYPE talk lasted for an hour and then the kids participated in a quick lesson of English pronunciation. They were told why their English sounded a tad different from how Lucky spoke. They found out how to pronounce open and closed sounds "a" and what "aspiration" is. They were interested to know how to say "which" and "witch" in a way to make it sound like two different words.

**YEKATERINBURG.** International Department hosted a master-class devoted to the International Translation Day. The speaker for the event was Yelizaveta Golousova, an associate professor at the Department of Journalism, UrFU, FLEX-95 and OW-99 programs alumna. High school students from local schools learnt about the ins and outs in translation that often make obstacles even for experienced translators: day-to-day realities of a different country, slang, differences in dialect, technical terms, acronyms, a translator's "false friends". Yelizaveta gave remarkable examples, shared her own experience and gave advice. Students, many of them were pupils of language schools, were able to learn a professional opinion on the differences in speech and writing, choosing the most appropriate meaning of the word, replacing the idioms of one language to the idioms of the other. English language teachers who attended the workshop together with their pupils were also delighted. "We loved it. Children not only learned a lot of interesting things, but also, very importantly, got the inspiration for their linguistic projects" - said A. Vladyko, a teacher at the school # 13, TEA-2010 program alumna.



**ROSTOV-NA-DONU.** On the 2nd of September in Don State Public Library there were several educational events to celebrate the beginning of a new school year. In the AC there was a presentation on International Educational opportunities. The students learned about a few school and Flex, UGRAD, Opportunity exchange programs. Also the 5th and 7th grade students tested their knowledge on the history and culture of the USA and Great Britain. By and large the schoolchildren answered almost all the questions and were most enthusiastic about modern English literature, namely Harry Potter.





## COORDINATORS VISIT THE US.

**Andrei Khokhryakov**, AC Coordinator in **PERM**, has visited the Kettering Foundation in Dayton, Ohio, as a part of a Russian-American joint project, where libraries, among other institutions act as communication grounds for civil dialogue and open access to information. The project is headed in Russia by the M.I. Rodomino All-Russian Library of Foreign Literature and involves different Russian libraries, including St.Petersburg, Vologda and Tvier. It gathered professionals from Europe and Asia, Africa and Australia, North and South Americas. On his return Andrei organized News Club at the AC and told the general public about his trip. Apart from being too serious, he gave a brief traveler's overview of how "average" Americans live, showing pictures of people, pets, houses, roads, markets and museums. Indeed trips like this help feel both professionally inspired and broad our cultural horizon, and pass it to those who are interested here in Russia.



**Victoria Kuleshova** from **BRYANSK** was lucky to become IVLP-2013 participant. ACC coordinators from Bangladesh, Republic of Belarus, Burma, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Vietnam, Haiti, Guinea, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Oman, UAE, Palestine, Poland, Russia, Ruanda, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Chad participated in this year program. Victoria is telling about her program experience: «We had an extraordinary group of people of different origins and religious faiths, everyone with his own habits, yet altogether we felt as a team cohered by common ideas and interests. During these three weeks we visited four cities located in four American states.

While in Washington DC we visited the public library in Arlington, the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, Newseum, and the Library of Congress. I was amazed by either a large scale of those or the government support of culture in whole. We were very lucky to happen to be in DC on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. With our own eyes we saw the way the Americans celebrate this day: enjoyed the colorful parade of different communities existing in the USA and the great fireworks performance over the Lincoln Memorial. Then my group went to warmly welcoming, bosomed in trees city of Dayton. We visited a filial branch of the Dayton Metro Library, and knew about a very interesting project developed there: special needs children come to the library and read books to specially trained dogs. Also we made a visit to the Wright State University's Paul Laurence Dunbar Library; the place possesses the document archives about the Wright brothers, inventors and aviation pioneers and building the world's first successful airplane. Also here we took in the International Peace Museum and met human rights organizations representatives.



In Denver, our next stop, we were amazed by the district library Anythink in Brighton that developed the great range of diverse and extraordinary activities: oil painting, LEGO-robot assembling, wineglasses funny cases sewing, etc. We had luck to create the latest "masterwork" in their studio. Atlanta became the last city we had visited during our program. We met Martin Luther King's daughter in Law, his friends and visited the house where he had been born. Next important place was Emory College of Arts and Sciences, where we discussed different international educational issues.

Due to participating in IVLP I met interesting and bright people. Upon return I keep communicating to my colleagues from other countries and host family from Dayton. The program let me realize the important role of libraries in the society but the library system transformation is needed and that would be very complicated to implement without the government support. Nowadays libraries are not only places providing information but centers for pleasant and educational activities. In my opinion it's vital to promote libraries' activities, attract public and sponsors' attention. In the US the way for efficient work of cultural establishments is paved; the experience exchange between American and Russian institutions let opportunities for developing new ideas. In the near future I plan to implement a few projects in partnership with both my colleagues from other countries and new partners in American libraries, colleges and universities. Of course, I will continue to develop my American corner as a center for education and communication."